

touch

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touch

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Summary

He seems to plunge into a sea of bodies, clothing and hands ghosting over George's skin and making it tingle and itch. He tries his best to jerk away but it's hopeless, there's too many people. He's surrounded. They're all looking at him and they're all fucking touching him and there's nowhere he can go.

Through the sirens blaring in his head, one thought makes it to the surface:

He's going to drown.

Or, George hates physical touch and has a panic attack in the airport on the way to meet his best friend, but luckily, Dream is there to help him through it.

Notes

hey lol i wrote this at like 1 am after me and my friend were talking about how george seems like he would be uncomfortable with physical touch and big crowds, and dream would be super caring and help him through it. in other words this is just me projecting because i am so fucking lonely.

// slight trigger warnings for panic attacks, anxiety, and sensory issues.

otherwise, enjoy this shitshow of a oneshot.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

George has never been a touchy person.

He doesn't know why, physical affection simply isn't his thing. It never has been, in fact.

As a child, his parents would try. Extending a hand to ruffle his hair, or pull him in for an hug. But George, at the ripe age of two, had just enough cognitive process to know what he did and didn't want, and for some reason, physical touch was always something he didn't.

Even though his parents had hoped, it didn't turn out to be a "phase", and his aversion to touch persevered

It wasn't that he didn't *like* the other kids his age, but any child under the age of ten isn't the best with personal space.

George *needed* his personal space.

So, instead of joining in with his neighbour's football game or playing tag in the park, George's childhood years were spent playing imaginary games with his figurines, or curled up in secluded corners reading and re-reading his worn copies of *Harry Potter*. Thus, successfully eliminating any possible circumstance of *touch*. And friends, unfortunately. But fictional wizards and plastic soldiers got him through it.

High school and college were a little better. While the average teenage population of George's schools weren't exactly jumping at the chance to befriend him, he had managed to make *some* friends. And those friends were, as most friends are, affectionate. Though George appreciated the sentiment, getting back pats and bro hugs from sweaty teenage boys wasn't exactly something he was keen on. His friends caught on of course, and the "What, you gay or something?"s were far too common. George would flush, and though he might have a little more attraction to boys than his teenage self was willing to figure out, he was sure that wasn't the reason.

He just didn't like being touched.

After college, the opportunity arises for a youtube career, and George pours in his heart and soul. After all, it's the perfect job. He's allowed to stay locked inside his room and play video games all day. No dealing with people. No touching. Perfect.

His hard work pays off, eventually, and blesses him with a lot more than just a stable income. He's surrounded by good friends he can hangout with at the click of a call button, and millions of fans that love him a lot more than he believes he deserves. It's pretty fucking cool, and George thinks it couldn't get any better. He's comfortable, he's let his guard down.

And then, one day, one of those "good friends" makes a proposal.

He and Dream had just finished a recording for George's channel, and the latter is basking in the happy exhaustion of completing a task he had been procrastinating on for way too long. But as he thinks about all the things he still has to do before he can make this upload his smile quickly fades. Hours of editing, a thumbnail, a title, along with streaming on the side, and-

"You should come to Florida some time to see me." Dream's voice plays through his headset, and George immediately tenses up in his chair.

Dream wants to meet George. In real life. Where they can see each other face to face instead of just through a shitty webcam. Where they can touch.

Dream has been by his side for over five years, and George couldn't ask for a better friend. Sure, Dream is competitive, obnoxious and sometimes downright cocky, but he's *Dream*.

Dream is the one that rejuvenated his love for minecraft, for coding and honestly, he's the one that opened the door for George to have this who youtube career in the first place. He's spent thousands of hours on call with Dream, whether it be messing around on random servers, showing each other stupid plugins they spent hours coding just to make the other laugh, or reacting to the stupid memes Dream sends him through discord.

But Dream is also there to comfort when he breaks down after hours of coding and the plugin *still not fucking working*. When the stress of being under constant gaze of millions has George picking himself apart in the mirror, Dream is there to whisper a soft "you're beautiful George, stop." Dream offers to finish editing his video for him after George has been stuck on it for days, stays on call with him until ungodly hours of the night, stays with him even after George falls asleep, and shows him the recordings he took of George sleep talking the next morning.

With his stupid laugh and utterance of “ *come with me* ” Dream set himself up as George’s best friend -his *partner*- for life.

Yet, for some stupid reason, thinking of seeing Dream in real life makes George feel sick to his stomach.

“George?”

It’s with a start that George realises that he hasn’t answered Dream’s proposal, just left him hanging, sitting in the call in silence.

“Shit, sorry I-”

“You don’t have to if you don’t want to, George.” Dream interrupts, “I just thought-”

He’s trying to sound nonchalant, but George knows him well enough to pick up on the slight tremor in his voice. The uncertainty and hurt. And instead of coming clean, explaining to Dream that he’s *scared* , that he’s terrified that as soon as they meet in real life Dream will realise that George is some weird, touch-hating freak and will leave him, George blurts out the first thing that comes to mind.

“I want to.”

“You do?” Dream’s voice is quiet, hopeful.

“Yes.” George says, aware of the hole he is digging himself into but unable to stop for fear that he will hear the same hurt in Dream’s voice as before. “I just...”

Dream doesn’t speak, the silence in the call suffocating as he waits for George to finish.

But what can he even say? That for some reason ever since he was a kid being in the physical presence of other people is nauseating to him? That George is scared that Dream will find him weird? Annoying? That five years of friendship will go immediately around the drain because George can’t find it in himself be a normal fucking person?

“I was just wondering when you were finally going to ask.” George says, and wants to scream because *he’s such a fucking idiot*.

But it’s true in a way. He’s laid awake many nights feeling sick with anxiety at the question always seemingly one conversation point away.

That’s not what his words made it sound like though.

“You’re such an idiot.” Dream scoffs, but George can hear the relief in his voice. The excitement. “Now’s better than never, right?”

George swallows. “Now’s better than never.”

Shit.

A mere week later, George is waiting in line to board his plane to Florida, fighting down nausea at the feeling of people moving around him. When he finally makes it onto the plane and finds his seat, he almost cries out a tearful prayer of thanks to see that the seats on either side are empty.

The flight is around 9 hours. Some might think it too long a time to be sitting cooped up in one spot, but George doesn’t really mind. He’s a minecraft youtuber, after all. Sitting down in one spot for long periods of time is an average day on the job.

George pulls on his headphones and presses play on his phone, music drowning out the voices of people as he stares out the window, trying desperately not to think about what awaits him when he lands.

9 hours comes and goes. George doesn’t sleep a wink.

Hugging his backpack to his chest as he watches every passenger gather their bags and leave the plane. Trying to stand and push through that hoard of exhausted business men and impatient Karens bustling to get up and out first is the textbook definition of George’s worst nightmare. So

he sits and waits patiently. When the plane is completely empty, he stands and leaves.

If the plane is his worst nightmare, then Florida's International Airport is the fiery pits of hell.

There's people pressing in from all sides, and due to his limited height, George is unable to see anything but the sea of bodies around him. Some are glued to their phones, scrolling through various social media feeds as they blindly push through, suitcases getting dragged behind them. Others are more polite, muttering soft "*excuse me*"s and "*sorry*"s as they make their way through the crowd, but their touches when they pass by still make George's skin crawl.

Why is it that he feels so out of place? So cripplingly uncomfortable? But George can't even begin to answer those questions before his vision starts to blur, panic creeping up his spine and swirling in his stomach. He blinks rapidly, heat blooming around his ears and neck, the blood roaring in his ears muffling the sounds of the crowd. Trembling arms and hands curl around his frame as he desperately tries to hide. Hide from what? Who? George doesn't even know. But the clamour of voices and shuffling of feet echo inside his skull as the anxiety rages and his throat begins to close.

Vaguely he registers his phone buzzing in his pocket, and almost in a trance he pulls it out, blurry eyes reading the notification.

Dream: *according to the fact your last text was sent almost ten hours ago, i'm pretty sure you've landed. where are you?? I cant wait to meet you george :D*

All of a sudden a lady roughly pushes past. Unsuspecting, George stumbles, and his phone clatters to the ground as he collides with another person. A tall man shoves him away with a scowl, muttering a bitter "what the fuck's wrong with you?" before he turns and disappears into the crowd.

The rollercoaster of panic has reached its tipping point, and now it's hurtling towards the ground.

He seems to plunge into a sea of bodies, clothing and hands ghosting over George's skin and making it tingle and itch. He tries his best to jerk away but it's hopeless, there's too many people. He's surrounded. They're all looking at him and they're all fucking touching him and there's nowhere he can go.

Through the sirens blaring in his head, one thought makes it to the surface:

He's going to drown.

“George!” A voice calls. He barely hears it. Head swirling and skin tingling as he tries not to suffocate. “George!”

The voice is closer. And closer. Then, all of a sudden, it's right in front of him.

“George,” A familiar voice says, and George's head snaps up. “Are you okay?”

Although he's never seen his best friend's face before in his life, as soon as George sees Dream something irrevocably fits into place.

He's tall, towering over George in a way that makes his mouth dry. Dark blonde hair falls unceremoniously across his forehead, and scatterings of freckles dot the skin of his cheeks. His friend's bright eyes -a murky yellow colour that George knows from Dream's tweet are actually green- are wide, and George stares.

George can't speak, his throat closing up when he opens his mouth to try. The panic isn't allowing him any spare energy to fit together words.

“I- I can't-“ George gasps, trying to voice the all consuming paranoia that's overtaking him. “I'm-”

“Hey, hey it's okay, George.” Dream says, voice smooth. “George look at me.”

George's eyes obediently flick back to Dream's.

“It's the all the people right?” He says, and George nods jerkily in response.

“The noises?”

“Yeah. But-” George inhales sharply as a man rushes past, even the touch of his coat causing him to flinch away. “The *touching*.”

“You don’t like touching?” Dream asks, and his voice is so soft and calming George wants to cry. Actually, judging by the hot stinging behind his eyes, he just might.

“It itches.” He chokes out, throat clogging with unshed tears. “I- I can’t *breathe*.”

“George I’m here okay?” Dream says, calm voice shaking slightly with worry. “I know you don’t like it but I need to get you out of here- can... can I touch you George?”

George hisses in a painful breath, trying to ignore the lump in his throat. He hesitates. Then nods.

Dream moves quickly, though gently so as not to scare him. A arm snakes behind George’s back, and a hand settles right at the base of his spine. Dream shifts, slightly angling his body forwards, his back pushing outwards toward the pulsing crowd, effectively shielding George from the worst of it.

“Let’s get out of here, yeah?”

It’s all George can do but nod, hoping Dream feels the movement.

Slowly, they move. George screws his eyes shut to tamp down the nausea when he feels the brush of people against him, putting all his focus on the presence of a warm hand on his back and the foreign heartbeat he feels where his face is pressed against Dream’s chest.

It feels like hours, *lifetimes*, before they finally stop, and the warmth falls away.

“Hey,” Dream speaks again, his low, quiet whisper sending shivers across George’s skin. The good kind. “You okay?”

George looks up and around, blinking at his surroundings. They’re outside, in some sort of small garden. There’s trees and flowers and freshly cut grass that leaves a tangy scent in the air and though George can still hear their distant voices, the devouring swathes of people are nowhere to be seen.

“Yeah.” George breathes. “I’m-I’m okay.”

He glances up at Dream to see a soft smile gracing his friend's golden features and his heart squeezes. Vaguely, he registers that Dream's light touch on his back never left. The warm hand still pressing against his skin through the fabric of his shirt.

“N-nice to meet you for the first time.” George smiles, coughing out a shaky laugh. “You look worse than expected.”

It's obviously a lie. George's weak attempt at humour to try lessen the suffocating concern in the air. Dream laughs anyway.

“Yeah?” Dream says, and he's smiling so wide George is surprised it doesn't hurt. “Well you look even cuter in real life than through a screen.”

“Shut up.” George says. But he's smiling, the anxiety slowly seeping out of him.

He's here, with Dream. And he's okay.

End Notes

if you made it to the end, hope you enjoyed and i love you please kiss me right now.

thanks for reading :)

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